

### College Rankings and Guides

[US News Online](#) - search for schools based on tuition, name, specialities, and distance from home

[Kaplan Online](#) - information on taking the PSAT, SAT, admissions, financial aid, and graduate school

[Princeton Review Online](#) - information on SAT, college rankings from tuition cost to parties

[Yahoo! College Search](#) - search by college name, major, state or by tuition

### Financial Aid for Students

Guides students through the process of locating and applying for financial aid. Prepared by the Congressional Research Service for Members of Congress.

{mooblock=The Basics: Getting Started}

•**Start gathering information early.**

•**Free information** is readily available from:

High school counselors

College and career school financial aid offices (where you plan to attend)

Local and college libraries

[Student Aid on the Web](#) (U.S. Department of Education)

Other Internet sites (search terms student financial aid OR assistance)

•**Ask questions:** counselors may know if you have exceptional circumstances that affect your eligibility.

•**Keep copies** of all forms and correspondence: you must reapply for aid each year.

•**Parents of students:** save money long before your child attends college.

[FinAid: for Parents](#)

[College Savings Plan Network](#) (state "Section 529" plans)

[Tax incentives for higher education expenses](#)

•**Good overviews:**

[Cash for College](#)

[FinAid: The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid](#)

[Financial Aid: You Can Afford It](#)

[Looking for Student Aid](#)

[Mapping Your Future](#)

[Paying for College](#)

•Beware of scholarship scams -- don't pay for free information!

[Department of Education](#)

[Federal Trade Commission](#)

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{mooblock=Student Aid and Where It Comes From}

### ***Basic assistance categories:***

#### •Financial need-based

Remember that students and their parents are responsible for paying what they can -- financial aid is a supplement, not a substitute, for family resources.

#### •Non need-based

Factors include academic excellence, ethnic background, or organization membership. Corporations may also offer assistance to employees and children.

### ***Federal Student Aid:***

- Provides nearly 70% of student aid under Loans, Grants and Work/study programs.

- Available to all need-based applicants; some loans and competitive scholarships for non need-based.

- Free information from the United States Department of Education:

- ▢ [Student Aid on the Web](#)

- ▢ [Financial Aid Resource Publications](#)

- Loans are the most common federal aid and must be repaid when you graduate or leave college.

- ▢ Stafford Loans (FFELs and Direct Loans) include:

- ▢ [Federal Family Education Loans \(FFEL\)](#) from private lenders, such as banks and credit unions, guaranteed by the federal government.

- ▢ [Federal PLUS Loans](#) parental loans, not need-based.

- ▢ [Perkins Loans](#) for the most needy undergraduates; through participating schools.

- Scholarships/grants are mostly need-based and require no repayment:

▢ [Pell Grants](#)

▢ [Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants](#) (FSEOG)

•Other grants, scholarships, and fellowships, mostly graduate level: search the [Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance](#) (CFDA) by *Beneficiary*, such as "Student or Trainee" or "Graduate Student".

•"Congressional" scholarships:

▢ Named for Member of Congress or other prominent individual (such as Byrd Honors Scholarships, Fulbright fellowships)

▢ Merit-based and highly competitive

▢ Members of Congress do not play a role in selecting recipients

•Work study programs allow you to earn money while in school:

▢ [Federal Work Study Program](#) : college campus jobs

▢ [Student Educational Employment](#) : jobs with the federal government

•For questions not covered by the Department of Education Web site, call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-433-3243.

***States offer residents a variety of scholarships, loans, and tuition exemptions.***

•Check with your [State Higher Education Agency](#) and [State Guaranty Agency](#) .

•Consider prepaid tuition and college savings ("Section 529") plans: [College Savings Plans Network](#) .

•Search your Internet browser under terms such as *student financial aid* or *assistance* AND *North Carolina*

***Colleges and universities provide some 20% of aid, most need-based.*** Check [university Web sites](#)

and the institution's financial aid office when you apply for admission.

***Private foundations, corporations, and organizations offer scholarships or grants:***

• [College Board Scholarship Search](#)

• [FastWeb](#)

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{mooblock=Targeted Aid}

### ***Targeted Aid for Special Groups:***

- [Grants for Minorities](#): Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, Latinos, Native Americans, and Other Ethnic Groups
- African Americans: [For Students: Scholarships](#)
- Disabled students: [Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities](#)
- Foreign students: [Financial Aid for International Students](#)
- Hispanic Americans: [Scholarships](#)
- Law school students: [Financial Aid for Law School](#)
- Medical students: [Financing Your Medical Education](#)
- Native Americans: [American Indian College Fund](#)
- Study abroad (for U.S. and non-U.S. citizens): [International Financial Aid](#)
- Veterans: [Education Benefits](#)



### ***Interested in public service?***

Federal assistance programs seek to encourage people to work in geographic areas or professions where there's a particular need (such as doctors in underserved areas); encourage underrepresented groups to enter a particular profession; and provide aid in exchange for services provided (such as military service).

- [AmeriCorps Education Award](#)

Volunteers who complete one year of service receive an education award for current higher education expenses or to repay student loans.

- [Army Tuition Assistance](#)

Additional benefits for Army personnel.

- [Bureau of Health Professions](#)

Scholarships and loans to needy health profession students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- [USAJobs](#)

Scholarships, grants, fellowships, internships, and cooperative education with federal agencies.

- [Indian Health Service](#)

Scholarships for American Indian/Alaskan Native health profession students and loan repayment for persons working in IHS facilities.

- Military academies:

[United States Air Force Academy](#)

[United States Coast Guard Academy](#)

[United States Merchant Marine Academy](#)

[United States Military Academy](#)

[United States Naval Academy](#)

- [National Health Service Corps](#)

Scholarships and loan repayment for health profession students who agree to work in underserved areas.

- [Nursing Scholarships](#)

Offered in exchange for two years of service in areas with critical nursing shortages.

- Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC)

For students who want to be commissioned as officers after graduating from college.

[United States Air Force ROTC](#)

[United States Army ROTC](#)

[United States Navy ROTC](#)

### **Aid for private K-12 education:**

No direct federal assistance, check with schools themselves:

- [Coverdell Education Savings Accounts](#) : for elementary and secondary school expenses as well as higher education.

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{mooblock=Repaying Your Loans}

After college, the **federal government** has ways to help you [repay your loans](#) .

- Eligibility depends upon the type of loan, when it was made, and whether it's in default. Check with your loan officer to find out if you qualify.

- [Loan Consolidation](#) : combine your federal loans into a single loan with one monthly payment.

- Sometimes loans may be canceled in exchange for public service.

[Teachers: Cancellation/Deferment Options](#)

[Health professions: National Health Service Corps](#)

[Law school graduates: State Loan Repayment/Forgiveness Programs](#)

[Medical school graduates: Loan Repayment Program](#)

[Federal employees: Federal Student Loan Repayment Program](#)

- If you are having problems with your loan and all other approaches fail, contact the Department of Education's [Office of the Ombudsman](#) .

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